

POEMS



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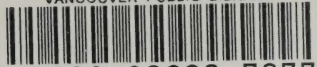
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POEMS

BY

DAVID FLEMMING LITTLE.



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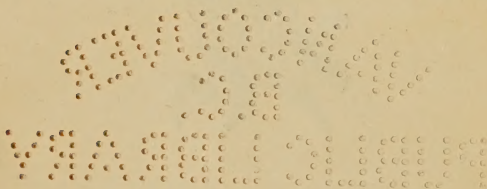
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1881.

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WOULD but one life be nobler made
By aught done here, 'twere well repaid;
For—grand the truth—"Of noble lives
Something immortal still survives."

Londonderry, N. S., 1881.



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THE WANDERER;


OR,

Stanzas Written in California.

1876.

I.

THOUGHTS OF HOME.

HE shades of eve are deepening round my bower,
And falling night brings thoughts that make me
yearn

For the dear sounds of home! This is the hour
When strangers' hall is joyless: heart doth turn
To heart of its own band. Who now would learn,
Even from a lover's accents, sweet and low,
Thoughts not of days gone by? If now I burn,
'Tis with the love of home; and well I know,
Where'er my foot may stray, that flame will brightly
glow.

How well do I remember every spot

The hours of youth have made so deeply dear !

O ! I would count it now a happy lot

To look upon those scenes, that rise so clear
To memory's eager eye ; scenes once too drear,

I thought, to feast the young, aspiring mind :
But what have I found since ? what find I here,
'Mid friends and nature grand, will memory bind
Like those bright, youthful days, left then unmourned
behind ?

How oft have I reclined beneath the trees,

Beside that gently murmuring river's brink !

How often have I sat to catch the breeze

Of eve upon the bank ! and I would link
Thought into thought, and linger still to think :

The circling sky became a narrow dome,
Too small to muse within ; for I did drink

Of nature's spirit cup—but now I roam ;

And no thought seems so sweet, no place is like my
home.

II.

AT MONTEREY.*

September wind is breaking o'er the hills,
And scattering clouds are flying from the sea ;
The sound of waters wild my bosom thrills ;
And from the deep there comes a voice, to me
More genial than the noise of revelry,
That now arises from the crowded hall :
And the fair moon and starry brilliancy,
Thin veiled, or glowing bright, impress the call
To be with nature forth upon the ocean's wall.

I gallop seaward. Spirit of the night,
With thee I love to wander ; and the sweep
Of darkening clouds athwart the streaming light
Of heaven, the swaying trees, the bounding leap
Of the proud horse against the gale, these keep

* Between the Pacific Ocean and Monterey Bay, at the head of which is Monterey, the old capital of California, there is a ridge of pine-covered hills about two miles wide. To have a gallop over these hills in something of a gale and to come suddenly within sight of the ocean, is a treat to a lover of the grand in nature never to be forgotten.

In influence with thee, while my heart is mute,
As carried onward—Lo ! the mighty deep !

Waves roll and dash, the wild jets heavenward
shoot—

O, who could tell the glory, who the power compute ?

Thoughts of majestic grandeur fill the mind—

The lightning flash, the thunder rolling dread ;
The mountain forest heaving in the wind—

The conquering host, with proud triumphal tread,
The charger's champ, the thousand banners spread,

The martial music, and the welcome home—
The hush of death, the deep dirge for the dead !—

He, who has chanced 'mid grandest scenes to roam,
May know the gazer's thought beside such ocean's foam.

The mighty tide, which rolls the thundering bore

Of Cobequid—pride of that slope so fair
From sheltering mountain southward to the shore—

Rocked me in youthful days ; and through the wear
Of manhood's stronger years, still everywhere

I stray, my thoughts seem like the waves to be,
As I had drunk the waters' spirit there,

Like him who sung the ocean's majesty,
The bard of nature's realm, or earth, or heaven, or sea.

His song I echo now to voiceless thrills,
As traveller on every ocean's brink ;
In storm or calm, its finished fitness fills
With wonder at the mind whose power could link
Such thoughts in words as hushed the world to think !
Even thy return to gaze upon the deep,
Who from the wreck-strewn shore were wont to shrink,
When they have learned the lay, sung to the sweep
Of his majestic soul o'er seas in rage or sleep.

The child of nature loves the lofty strain
Of praises, chanted to her flashings bright
On mountain peak, or stayless march on main ;
Her beauties traceable by day's calm light,
Or grandeurs known but in the ' glorious night ;'
And now, a wanderer on mount and shore,
My heart doth draw from nature chief delight,
And I rejoice with bards sublime the more,
That I have learned to muse, to know, and to adore.

O ! give me still the shore, the mount, the wood ;
Still keep me from the cities' work of men ;
For who, that oft on summit rock has stood,
After a night o'er works of mortals' pen
Or after crowded life has turned again

To stand by ocean, has not felt the spell
Of something mightier than what charmed him, when
He gave his heart to science, art, or shell?
Who turns from scenes like this, but with a forced
farewell?

III.

AT YOSEMITE.*

Turn, turn away, mine eye ; I cannot think ;
Thought is all stunned at that grand, awful sight !
To stand upon the rapid river's brink
Gives me a feeling of intense delight ;
To see the maddened ocean in its might,
Huge billow rolled 'gainst mightier boundary,

* "Either the domes or the waterfalls of the Yosemite, or any single one of them even, would be sufficient in any European country to attract travellers from far and wide in all directions. Certainly, taking the whole region of the Yosemite together, with its five great falls, the lowest 400 feet and the highest 2,600, it must be allowed that, in this particular kind of scenery, it is without a rival in the world."—J. D. WHITNEY, *State Geologist of California*.

The highest *unbroken* fall, the upper part of the Yosemite, is 1,500 feet.

Inspires me with a reverence as rite ;

But I am more than silent here with thee,
Thou holdest the breath of thought, thou dread
Yosemite !

Far up beside thee, thou tremendous Fall,

There is a tree, which twice a hundred feet
Has risen from a creviced ledge of wall :

It looks no larger there, than from the street
The plant in window high ! But who can mete

Thy greatness to the soul ? Here I did stand
At early morn, and think with words to greet

Thee ; but my heart was overcome ; my hand
Was not outstretched ; I stood, in speech, in thought
unmanned.

Thou river rolling from Sierra's snows,

The measure of a mountain downward leaps
Thy flood to vale below ! The thick mists close

Around thy base, most awful fall ; whence sweeps
Away the white foam of thy rage, in heaps.

But far above thy clouds thou dost appear,
The wonder of all continents ! He keeps

No watch like this by thee, who comes not here :
Not Fundy's mightiest waves have such sublime
career.

O, thou magnificently mighty ! would

That heaven-born spirit, strong as thine, might break
The spell in which thou holdest mine : I should

Not then but feel and silent be ; but wake
Would I the notes thou dost inspire, and make

To thrill the heart, but which thou minglest there
With awe and wonder, till they thus forsake

The soul—unutterable : e'en the prayer
I'd raise to other power, thou turn'st to low despair.

Now I have watched thee into starry night,

Nor keep my vigil with less earnest eye ;
For now around thee, from the vale to height

Where thou dost take farewell of regions high,
The mountain columns, thy companions nigh

Put on a glory all unknown by day ;
And they appear the pillars of the sky !

And thou art here among them in thy play,
Most beautiful of grandeurs 'neath yon milky way.

And now the moon has risen above the peaks ;

And her fair beams seem glad to greet thy face :
The vapory cloud beneath, ascending seeks

To spread its beauty near thee, and with grace

Floats on the rising wind ; now from their place
A hundred outer jets to spray are blown !
O glorious scenes ! He who doth joy to trace
Grandeurs which art nor words can e'er make known,
Let him watch here by night, devoutly and alone.

It is the hour of noon on high Clouds' Rest ;
And such a change of scene from yester-night ;
Sierras, north, and east, and south, and west,
Rise near and far to the admiring sight !
At Inspiration point, where depth and height
Break on the soul at once, it bounds with praise,
Then stills itself in wonder ! but the light
Below this mountain edge grows dim, a haze
In gorge so terrible, here brains might reel and craze.

Let me draw back, and look to Lyell*—Lo !
Where nearer than the glacier, like a sea
The dark pines 'neath us heave in storm, while glow
The sunbeams round our watch-tower here ! Ah thee
I love, thou lightning !—Heavens ! that giant tree,
Shivered, on fire ! and the deep thunders roll

* From Clouds' Rest the glacier on Mount Lyell can be seen in clear weather.

Along the canyons wild ! O this to me
Is life, the rapture I would not control :
Now is thy day of years, thine hour of joy, my soul ! *

IV.

IN LOS ANGELES, 1880.†

Years have departed since I wrote those lines ;
But with delight I still recall the day,
When down we galloped through the waving pines,
And filed into the narrow, rocky way,
Which great Nevada Fall greets with its spray ;
A day but once lived, and a road most fit
To lead from heights, where lightnings were at play
Round peak and glacier, to such vale, 'tis lit
With twilight half its day—"unique, grand, awful !"
writ.

* Only once have I had the pleasure of standing on a mountain and looking down on a thunder-storm. My feelings of delight I could not describe.

† "From the city to the sea is a plain of great productiveness, blessed with a climate unsurpassed for its pleasantness and salubrity. Until recently the flat, adobe buildings, *a la Mexicano*, were mostly found in Los Angeles, but now examples of handsome modern architecture prevail. . . . Fruit trees of all sorts grow in the neighbourhood, and over a million grape vines are to be found within the city limits."—*California Illustrated Spirit of the Times*.

Now California I must bid adieu ;
Nor from the glorious alone I sigh
To turn me eastward : friendship, tried and true,
And scenes all lovely, I must bid good-bye !
O land, whose Winter is but Spring, mine eye
Grows dim, that henceforth I must be away
From all I love beneath thy smiling sky ;
But chiefly still to thee, O Monterey !
To thee my thoughts do cling, and to a happier day,

Who that has dwelt beside thy deep-blue waters,
And heard the evening notes of sweet guitar,
And smiled to glances of thy dark-eyed daughters,
Does not remember them when thence afar ?
Oft have I thought, neath vine, nor moon, nor star,
Have I found pleasures elsewhere as with thee !
At Lobos, grottos, waves, spray, rainbows are ;
Point Cypress let him seek who loves the sea ;
Thy shores, thy woods, thy halls, still all are dear
to me.

The twilight deepens ; and my heart to home
Turns as 'tis wont ; deep in my soul abides
The love of those dear ones from whom I roam ;
In cities full of life, on mountain sides

Where cataracts roar, in southern park where glides

The waterfowl 'mid prodigal array

Of floral wealth, where'er I rove, the tides

Of thought turn backward at the close of day,

To scenes and loving friends, more dear the more I
stray.

CALIFORNIA is one of those delightful lands eagerly sought by tourist and invalid. Either can be reasonably satisfied within the "Golden State." But southern California has the climate that is not only salubrious but charming. Many persons who have lived there for a few years and returned to their native places, have removed back again, declaring they could not be content and would not live in any other land.

It is a country in which persons suffering from lung disease, while able to walk or drive, can be in the open air three-quarters of the days even in winter. On the mountains at two or three thousand feet in elevation the weather is seldom too hot during the day, and at night it is always cool enough for refreshing sleep. Here, too, is the diversity of little ridges of oak-covered hills and fertile vales, in which are seen cosy cottages nestling in gardens of most beautiful flowers and delicious fruits.




STANZAS
ON
ODD FELLOWSHIP.

Inscribed to the Brothers of Monterey Lodge, I. O. O. F.

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA, 1879.

I.

HOU spirit breath from realm divine
That movest hearts to utter song,
Inspire me, and my notes prolong
Meet for a great and blest design :
My theme, ODD FELLOWSHIP, attend
For Friendship, Love and Truth descend.

Stretched on the couch of suffering low
I saw the Brothers soon appear ;
The footsteps light I could not hear,
But watched the faces come and go ;
And looked into the pitying eye,
That fills to see a brother die.

The gentle pressure of the hand,
The kind inquiry, and the care
For every comfort needed there,
A strain of heartfelt thanks command :
O ! worthy make my grateful lay,
As kind my brothers day by day !

II.

Odd Fellowship, thy name to me
Is sacred as the sound of home ;
Far have I chanced from that to roam,
But wasted weak I lean on thee :
Thou art my guardian, thou my friend,
For thee my daily thanks ascend.

And thoughts of thee do fill my mind,
Since learning I no more pursue,
For musing on the good and true,

How fit a theme in thee I find !

The lessons of thy pleasant hall,
And thy Benevolence to all.

And thinking of thy blessings shed
On stranger where his kin are not,
On widows' board and orphans' lot,
Brings gladness to my lowly bed :
Hence would I now our Order sing,
May heavenly powers the music bring !

III.

Long years ago, in solemn hall,
I saw one taught Odd Fellowship :
He heard from earnest, aged lip

The patriarchal accents fall,
' Give heed unto my words, my son ;
My course thou seest is nearly run.

' I have been young, but now am old ;
Yet have I ne'er the righteous seen
Forsaken ; and the holy sheen
Of heaven is round his children's fold :
Blessed his own children's lot,
Forget it not ! Forget it not !

Let me not tread on holy ground,
Except as I have trod before,
When tokens of my right I wore,
Teaching and guiding brother round :
The beauties of our blessed zone,
Save to the members lie unknown.

Enough, no longer stranger he !
Where'er from Nova Scotia's mines
To San Diego's palms and vines,
In this great land his place might be,
There he could find a brother's hand,
And need of friends would friends command.

IV.

Oh ! what it is in health to live !
And be a true and worthy man—
To be a power in the van,
Who for our cause their life would give !
The friendly help, the cheerful mood,
O, who can estimate their good ?

Blest be the hand stretched forth to greet
The stranger brother heartily ;
Blest be the face forever free

To scatter smiles along the street ;
 Blest be the words that fall like dew
 To cheer the drooping heart anew.

And O a thousand times be blest
 The man who adds to these his aid,
 Who from himself is not afraid
To take some means, or time, or rest,
 That he may help a brother man
 In hour of need or baffled plan.

V.

He, only he, who has been low
 With suffering in a foreign land,
 Can know how feels the friendly hand,
How sounds the whisper, soft and low—
 The kind regard that thrills the heart,
 And makes the grateful tear-drop start.

Far from my home and scenes of youth,
 Far from my loving sisters' care,
 Far from the thousand comforts there,
An invalid am I ; in sooth,
 But for that Fellowship so dear,
 Too wretched for existence here.

Now I look back to manhood's prime,
For I have passed from that bright stage,
Though mine are not the years of age,
But of a blighted life's dark time ;
Consumption, subtle, slow disease,
Embitters toil and saddens ease.

Yes, I look back to those blest days,
When manly work and pastime brought
Alternate to my daily lot
The charms which kept me in such ways ;
And looking back, my heart is moved,
And cries, heaven bless, as I have loved !

Bright be their memory to all
Whose thoughts turn back to them, those
days ;
But here I may not bring their praise,
Whate'er their joys in bower or hall ;
Enough, 'twas then that I did learn
Odd Fellowship, to which I turn.

VI.

I saw a woman, come* to find
O'er him she loved the cold earth piled,
And children who, all cares beguiled,
Had gamboled round that father kind ;
For those dear ones, then met by want,
Who bid its wretched forms avaunt ?

Odd Fellowship a home supplied ;
Odd Fellowship its comforts brought ;
And the few sisters cheered the lot
Of one by loss so sadly tried ;
And children glad dispersed the gloom,
That else had deepened to the tomb.

Not hers the toil in want and woe,
That must go on for daily bread ;
Not hers the aching hand and head,
That, half-refreshed, must rise to sew,
Lest the gaunt wolf be in her fold,
Or her babe stiffen with the cold.

* To California.

Not theirs to have no mother's time
Devoted to their mental life ;
Not theirs to rise through want and strife,
Uneducated, save in crime :
A mother's work most truly great,
Reared honest children for the State.

VII.

Odd Fellowship, thou mighty branch
Of the great parent tree of good,
Of all that fruitful, fair have stood,
As storms have risen to blight and blanch,
Where is another growth like thine ?
Protected, pruned by hand divine !

Not that the stem which points above,
Should be dishonored by my voice,
Round it the millions loud rejoice,
When Sabbath bells recall the love
Of the All-seeing God to man,
Howe'er the creeds may show his plan.

But thou great branch, whose fair fruit falls
All ripe and certain in this vale,
Whose plenty makes the good prevail,

Whose emblems beautify our halls,
Of all I've seen 'neath light and shade,
My heart-felt theme hast thou been made.

For Friendship, sacred and sublime,
He is a son of heavenly birth,
And sent to bless man's course on earth,
Finds this "new age" his glorious time ;
'Swords into ploughshares sees he wrought,'
And triumphs great, by blood unbought.

And Love, the daughter of the skies,
Is beautiful as morning light,
While breaking on the watcher's sight,
Or starry heaven to poets' eyes ;
Love, holy, sweet, unselfish love,
By that we picture God above.

And Truth, eternal as the heaven,
Is destined to prevail on earth,
To be the judge of word and worth,
When happier days to man are given—
When Friendship, Love and Truth combined,
Have blessed the lands of all mankind.



RECOLLECTIONS
OF A
VISIT TO SONOMA.

To W. S. Wells, Esq.:

DEAR SIR,—This short and poor production is inscribed to you for three reasons: You are an esteemed friend of mine, a brother of “the Doctor,” and, like myself, you are not blessed with a wife and children. The Dedication can do you no honor, but I hope the Recollections will give you some pleasure.

Your sincere friend,

DAVID F. LITTLE

San Diego, California, 1879.

COME darling Memory, thou truthful friend,
To bless my evening hour thy company lend ;
My chair is set where cool airs round my feet
And foliage green dispel the summer heat ;
This dale will soon be hidden from the sun,
Be thine the hour before the day is done !

O Memory ! unlike delusive Hope,
That still deceives us as we onward grope,
I woo thee, for thy strain is sweeter now
Than aught besides to which mine ear can bow ;
I love thee for thy truth, and truth alone
Can charm this heart which now is all its own.

And of the many lays which thou canst sing—
Of youthful hours and scenes of life's sweet spring,
Of manhood's pleasures, and serenest joys
When science triumphed over all decoys,
And of the friendships which can only fade
When life itself has passed into the "shade"—
Choose once again from fair Sonoma Vale
To draw the notes which can so well prevail

O, now I catch thy music with delight !
And clustering trees and vineyards rise in sight ;

Field after field with loaded vines appears,
And garden after garden treasures rears :
Behold the pleasant vale so fair extend,
From shore to where the rugged hills ascend !

Now at the Doctor's door I touch the bell,
And sounds within, which youthful pastimes tell,
Fade into silence, and the opened door
Shows me the eldest of the boys, "the four."
Soon I am seated in an easy chair,
And soon appear more youthful faces fair :
The "Father is away, but he'll be back
Within an hour now ;" and there is no lack
Of questioning about my health and "trip,"
While kind remarks between the questions slip,
Until the mother, from a neighbor's brought,
Greets with her welcome kind ; then, as they ought,
The children listen, while their mother's face
Is guiding Goddess of the happy place.

An hour is passed o'er topics interesting,
This mutual friend and that remembered thing ;
The town affairs, the Grove beside the bay,
And prospects yet for dear old Monterey.
And now the children tell me of their schools,
Speak of the teachers' "ways" and grievous rules ;

One wishes I would teach them for awhile,
Which all the rest approve with pleasant smile ;
And when I tell them I shall teach no more,
A sad-like wonder spreads their faces o'er ;
But when I say, " perhaps I'll settle down
And keep a book-store in Sonoma Town,
With story books, pictures, and curious things,"
A chorus, quick and loud, and gladsome rings,
For now the mother to the kitchen gone,
I ween to have the supper not brought on
Until the Doctor comes, the children all
Increase their joyous noise through room and hall.

O blessed youth ! so free from care and strife :
O happy spring-time of this human life !
Could I one hour enjoy thy health and glee,
And then have Heaven present the choice to me,
To live again as I had lived before,
Or with the flowerets die and be no more,
Methinks I'd say, O Heaven my choice is this,
To give each loving friend a parting kiss,
To say good-by, then turn once more my eyes
Upon the distant hills and bluer skies,
To look upon the woods, and fields and bay,
Then in a flowery bed myself to lay,

To close my eyes with flowers around me pressed,
And breathe my spirit into endless rest !

But wherefore muse I ? periods mark the race,
Which is one journey to a destined place,
And if some happier are than others given,
Let me be glad and thank the grace of heaven ;
Rejoice o'er every good that greets my soul,
But when an ill intrudes think of the whole.
While youth was mine I revelled in its joys,
Nor felt the weight of care which now annoys ;
But oft o'er childish griefs I sadly dwelt,
And thought all sorrows great to youth were dealt.
'Tis thus the boy does long for manhood's ways,
And man, forgetting, turns to boyhood's days,
Thinks how supremely blest his lot was then,
And hates the cares which still encumber men.
While could we see the scales the difference try
Between the good and ill of years gone by,
Perchance we'd find the balance much the same
Through youth and age, obscurity and fame.

But hark ! I hear the Doctor in the hall,
And "papa's home," the younger voices call ;
Now in he comes, the gentlemanly friend,
And quick a hearty welcome doth extend ;

Regrets the visit was not sooner made,
And more the sickness causing it delayed.

And now into the dining room we walk,
Are seated, pause a moment in the talk,
While the good Doctor turns our thoughts to heaven
In thankfulness for all the blessings given,
In prayer that we be guided in the right,
By influence of the Holy spirit's light.—
Blest is the board like this where'er it be,
Where southern clime gives rich variety,
Or where the scanty north or mountain height
Provides for strength, not caters for delight.—
The mother makes some slight apology,
As matron will however nice things be ;
And thus the conversation turns on food,
And I applaud, for everything is good ;
But my good friends depreciate their store,
The time for earlier fruits now being o'er—
For peaches, berries, great variety—
But grapes supply the world of fruits to me.
And cheerfulness is shown in every glance,
For well the dining room can mirth enhance ;
The doctor tells a funny anecdote,
Which sets the sounds of laughter all afloat,

And conversation, wit, and Liber's cheer
Allow no entrance to a trouble here ;
All, from the grandma pleasant still in age,
With helping hand and few remarks but sage,
To little Alice rosy, sweetly fair,
All pleased and pleasing seem without a care.
O earth ! if thou couldst yet such joy afford,
O could I yet be seated at my board,
With wife and children happy circling round,
The chief of all life's good were surely found !

But in the sitting-room assembled now,
Fortune does greater pleasures still allow ;
" St. Nicholas—for Girls and Boys " is here,
And for a while affords us lively cheer ;
Its pictures, puzzles, illustrations apt,
O'er which all laugh and little hands are clapped,
With humorous remarks and fitting tales
Repel all cares, and mirth alone prevails.
Thus time wings on across the evening hours,
Till nine displays the drowsy god's calm powers ;
The children therefore say their kind good nights,
And slow retire. And mine are the delights
Of hearing parents speak their children's praise,
And tell their progress in the Book-taught ways,

Of joining in a talk o'er days gone by,
Forgetful how the hours of this one fly,
Till all the evening gone and low the fire,
I recollect myself and pleased retire.

Now, high above the hills the morning sun,
The pleasures of a survey are begun ;
Our carriage slowly wheels along a street,
Where orchard groves still groves of orchard meet ;
Where stately trees afford delightful shade
To game-laid lawn and half-hid cottage glade ;
Or where the vine-clad fields for miles extend,
And scattering oaks their grander beauty lend.
And now alighting where a garden lies
In semi-tropical profusion's dyes,
We pass in wondering thought from flower to
flower,
Admire the walks and rest us in the bower.
Thus hours are spent in driving, seeing, talk,
The last not least on road or garden walk ;
For conversation to the human race
Can heighten joy in almost every place,
Except where nature stills, as by the sea,
Or scenes like those of grand Yosemite.

I pass o'er three glad weeks. 'Tis now the day,
When I must force myself "farewell" to say.
The girls, excused from school, dear, lovely friends,
Move me by kindness as my visit ends ;
The best of dinners they are having made,
The choicest fruits upon the board are laid ;
While kind as blest the mother cheers us all,
Till sounds the last good-bye within the hall !
Thus from the home I part, the Doctor last,
And wheeled away a parting look I cast !

Farewell, O friends so kind ! my heart is weak
As I look back ; and words can never speak
The thoughts I feel ; for friendship such as yours
Warm through the soul a flood of feeling pours ;
And deep my spirit sighs that earth has few
So kind and good, so lovable as you.

Muse of the Past, good night !—the lamp is lit !—
I thank thee, and I would thy lay were writ.
Thus thought I as I left my shaded seat,
And toward the cottage slowly turned my feet ;
And I resolved, by love of friendship moved,
To tell what my Sonoma friends had proved.

But feeble now my hand and weak my mind,
I do not justice to the good and kind,
But only show how much my heart loves yet
To dwell o'er scenes it never can forget,
How memory recalls that visit sweet,
And friendship bids it oft the lay repeat.



MISCELLANEOUS.

TO MISS B _____.

THE flower by inspiration of the light
Becomes a beauty light is proud to see ;
Then might not I be beauteous in thy sight
Could I but ever get inspiring light from thee ?

1876.

TO MISS _____, A CLOSE STUDENT.

MY friend, you may call me "the gay Mr. L.,"
Quote "a whispering tale in a fair lady's ear ;"
But my mind had been clinging to study too well ;
I'm no stranger to books, nor religious career.

1876.

JULES TRAVERNIER; OR, THE PAINTER.

INTO a kingdom of his own
The painter turns with a smile ;
And his loyal subjects build him a throne,
As rich as the fairies' isle.

Their beauty is inexpressible,
Those wonders around his seat ;
And gold and gems are but good enough
To lie about his feet !

The marshals that around him throng
Are Nature's guardian host ;
And they bring the beauties of every zone,
The glories of every coast.
And O what a picture they paint him there !
Till his heart bows down in love—
In the homage of a cultured soul
To nature's God above.



THE SOLACE OF PHILANTHROPY TO THE
OVERBURDENED.

"Break, break, break,
On thy cold gray stones O sea !
And I would that my tongue could utter
The thoughts that arise in me."

TENNYSON.

BREAK, break, break,
On the rocks of life, oh heart !
I would to God I could still
The murmurs that in thee start !

Thy billows, rolling sea,
A heaving, heartless band,
Can smooth the crags o'er which they dash,
And flow on glittering sand.

But oh ! the surging of my mind
Wears but its strength away ;
And the same rough rocks it beats upon,
But weaker than yesterday.

Break, break, break,
On the crags of life, oh heart !
'Tis well if thy surging can only smooth
The path of some sadder one's part.

FAREWELL TO SAN DIEGO.

(LEAVING ON STEAMER, JUNE, 1878.)

FAREWELL to San Diego friends,
To hearts so kind and true ;
While'er I feel the throb of life
My thoughts will turn to you.

To brothers of the mighty "links,"
And of the "mystic tie,"
Farewell to meet in that Grand Lodge
Which has been called on high.

Where but the faithful are prepared,
And God himself presides ;
Where goodness is the one degree,
And naught admits besides.

Farewell both friends and pleasant scenes
Beside the peerless bay,
In memory still I'll cling to you
Though far my feet may stray.

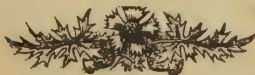


TO MISS L — H —.

(IN ANSWER.)


FORGET thee? Not while worth I see,
Or memory claims a pleasure ;
When turned from toil to think of thee
Will be my dearest leisure.
Thine image in my heart enshrined,
So fair, so bright, so cheering,
In sweetest mood shall keep my mind,
Thyself the more endearing.

Forget thee ! Not while thought I know,
Though wide our paths may sunder,
And darker waters o'er me flow
Than suffering keeps me under.
I'll think of thee while earth I roam,
And if to me 'tis given
To reach ere thou the Blessed Home,
I'll long for thee in heaven !



C. L. CARR.

(IN MEMORY.)

ITH quivering lip and tear-dimmed eye,
His fate is read by many a friend ;
But this we trust is not the end,
There is a part that cannot die.
Then put the sad announcement by ;
“In midst of life we are in death ;”
But from the flesh-destroying breath
The spirit wings its flight on high.

To all there comes the great decree,
That dooms the living to the dead ;
For all the shroud of “past” is spread,
Who feel our frail humanity :
But ‘honed, wept, and sung’ is he,
The man, the patriot, the friend,
Whose voice and hand did ever tend
To fellow-man’s felicity.

The gentle heart, the cultured mind,
That loved with favorite bard to dwell,
That felt the sympathetic spell
Of classic author strong to bind ;

That with the social few refined
In sacred home held converse sweet,
These still with kindred ones will meet,
And still eternal pleasures find.



LINES

TO A SISTER ON HEARING OF HER DEATH.

THE tears that from an aching heart
Unbidden rise and silent flow,
Oh ! what are these to pay the part
A brother for thy love doth owe ?

My sister ! could an angel's pen
Convey the thoughts that rise in me,
Thy worth and loveliness might then
Be sung in fitting melody.

That spirits saintly sweet as thine
Are found among our sinful race,
Proclaims our primal source divine,
And bids us seek that better place.

But o'er the souls that held thee dear,
How is the robe of sorrow drawn !
Forever from this gloomy sphere,
Thou art forever from us gone.

Ah ! sad must be the dear home now,
Thy bright and cheering smile hath fled ;
Love's last wreath has adorned thy brow ;
Oh ! can it be that thou art dead ?

The May-green fields, the orchard flowers,
Looked they the same that mournful day,
As when in cloudless, youthful hours
We roamed and danced the time away ?

The scenes along the river banks,
The wild-flowers, birds' nests as of yore,
The trees in nature's own free ranks,—
They still are there, but thou no more !

Farewell ! for brighter worlds designed,
Thou image fair of truth and love,
Since thou art gone my troubled mind
Turns longing to the home above.

MY MOTHER.

(ON RECEIVING MANY YEARS AFTER HER DEATH A LOCK OF
HER HAIR IN A LETTER FROM HOME.)

MY Mother ! O how dear to me
The memory of those days long past,
When I could ever turn to thee
Nor know such pleasure would not last !
But I have learned in gloomy shade
The dearest friend may shortest stay,
The dearest hope most quickly fade :
Nought blooms that blooms not to decay.



THOUGHTS OF MY HOME IN ACADIA.

CALIFORNIA, 1876.

MY home ! and have I still in that dear land
A home ? And is there still a chair for me,
Which will be vacant till the mystic hand
Of fate will lead me back ? O could they see
Mine eye turned thither, sad and longingly,
And read the thoughts of them I feel to-night,
The stranger's thoughts of home, how quick would be
The tear-drop shed, the prayer put up—the rite
Of sister's love, and life “ by faith and not by sight.”

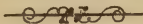
Perhaps they're kneeling now, and turn to pray
For those who bow the knee no longer there ;
And when they think of one, so far away
From them and all the rest held dear, the prayer
Will be more deep and earnest, that the care
Of heaven's kind hand may with him still abide,
To lead aright, to shield from wily snare,
To be the sure, the constant, cheering guide
Of him who long did join, but now is sundered wide.

O blessed was that home, where sage-given light,
O'er all the joys and griefs of our abode,
Shone like the lamps of heaven by day and night,
Diffusing peace and lessening every load :
The parents walking in the "narrow road,"
And solemn in devotion, strict in rule,
Still gladly cheered where youthful faces glowed
With merry play, o'er shop or garden tool,
O'er labors of the farm or task of village school.



TO A CHILD AT PLAY.

THY ringing notes of childish glee,
That speak a mind yet free from care,
Thou little knowest how sweet to me
Is every echo on the air :
Thou call'st me back to days long past,
The sunny days of mirth and play,
Before my sky was overcast,
And smooth and flowery was my way.



ON THE LONELY SHORE.

THE sad sea seems to answer what I think ;
And I half stoop to catch its kind reply !
It seems so strange that there must be a brink
O'er which I cannot pass to mingle my
Existence with the waves ! Or low or high,
Their song is all my music now : the notes
Of other powers have sometimes filled mine eye ;
But from the eternal sea an anthem floats,
That fills and lifts the soul !—keep hence artistic notes.

SONNET TO MISS M— W—.

EMBOWERED, where the zephyrs of a clime,
Rich in its floral loveliness, do play
Their summer gambols at the close of day,
Thou sittest, thinking, and it is the time
When thought grows spiritual and sublime—
Before the mellowing and lessening ray
Of the beloved twilight hour gives way
To later eve—while still the sounds do chime,
When heard, with nature's whisperings; and thine eye
Reveals the inspiration of a heart
That catches wisdom's notes with impulse high!
O! lady, thus inspired, thine is a part
Of the expression of our God anigh :
A form of the adorable thou art.



TO A YOUNG LADY FRIEND.

(IN HER ABSENCE ONE EVENING FROM OUR BOARDING-HOUSE.)

MY heart turns back to other days,
And cons their pleasures over ;
And leaves its sighs in all the ways

I've trod, a reckless rover ;
Sweet were the hours of love and song,
And gay as fond the lover ;
Nor thought as time flew swift along,
The dark clouds soon would hover.

But while I've life still let me hope,
Let weakness cease repining ;
The wisest men through darkness grope,
And who knows God's refining fire ?
Let thoughts of friends alone me cheer,

For mine could be no kinder ;
And I can say of one most dear,
She threw a *kiss* behind her.

Bellena, Cal., March, 1879.

TO MISS K— G—.

AS heaven, that through the gloom of night
Its starry radiance streams,
So, love, art thou, thy dark eyes' light
Subduing, charming beams.

Alas ! that thou should'st have the power
To move and fascinate,
While I must live from hour to hour,
The wretched child of fate.

The chance of knowing health again
No more appears to me ;
And oh ! the thought—how weak my pen —
Is *hell* since knowing thee.

BURNSON'S BELIEF.

(THE COMMENTS OF AN INVALID ON SEEING A POOR, OLD DOG
FORMERLY KNOWN AS A FINE, NOBLE ANIMAL.)

MY noble friend so strong and brave,
That scornedst alike the foe and wave,
Hast thou too reached where nought can save
From lowly lying ?
Ay ! soon they'll put thee in the grave,
Beyond that sighing.

'Twas truly grand thy fearless dart
At duty's call to do thy part ;
But ah ! too feeble now thou art
For any mission ;
It almost makes the tear-drop start,
Thy sad condition.

But should it be as I've been taught,
Perhaps I'll learn to bless the lot
Of those like thee that go to nought,
(As I expect it,)
Instead of getting it " red hot "
For disinfectant.

Though that is not just what they preach,
Eternal burning's what they teach,
To gnash the teeth and wail and screech,
Each son and daughter,
But never get within the reach
Of a drop of water.

To scorch and bake and roast and broil,
And still live on—such flesh won't spoil—
Or hold one foot up from the soil
All brimstone burning,
Till he gets tired of such damned toil
And goes to mourning.

Yet fear I not such fate will fall
To any creature on this ball ;
Sure the Creator of us all
Is not so cruel,
That he would damn us great and small
For useless fuel !

Ah that harsh wind—I'll have to say
Good-bye, my friend, and haste away,
Or I'll be coughing all the day—
Thous't not that bother—
Though well I might prolong my stay
With such a brother.



THE EMIGRANTS.

(These lines were written to form a part of Stanzas on Odd Fellowship ; but the form of that piece was changed and these lines excluded).

'T WAS when the summer days were long,
When yet the grain was growing green,
When yet the wild flowers fair were seen,
In Scandanavia, by a throng
That from a deck looked back to land,
Silent two men were seen to stand.

They gazed upon the fields and hills,
Where they had roamed in youthful days,
Content with boyish aims and plays,
When scarce they knew this life has ills.—
He, who to foreign lands has turned,
May know the thoughts that in them burned.

From Sweden, bound the waters o'er,
They sailed, two nobly good young men ;
Their hearts were strong and cheerful then
With visions of the New World's shore ;
Nor recked they of the ocean broad
Between it and their native sod.

Each was the other's dearest friend ;
 Together they had wrought and read,
 The same had been their room and bed ;
And thus they wished, till heaven would send
A day of happier fortune still,
And they their spheres in *homes* should fill.

But oh ! of all we plan on earth,
 How little do we realize !
 Of all the aims our glad hearts prize,
How few survive their year of birth !
Of all the slippery hopes we grasp,
How few are kept within our clasp !

O man, a wonder to thyself !
 A being blind in plan and deed,
 In gathering gain or curing need,
In doing good or hoarding pelf ;
And oft while hurrying on thy track,
Retreating then most swiftly back !

Thy hopes are like the dews of morn,
 And evanescent in their hour,
 As is the moisture on the flower,
When summer winds are o'er it borne :
Oh ! brother man, short-sighted, vain,
Is most we do for good or gain !

In mid ocean the cry was heard,
 “ The ship’s on fire !” “ the ship’s on fire !”
 O God ! of all the tidings dire,
That ever rose by human word,
Protect me from that awful sound,
When helpless hundreds crowd around !

Another eve, and from the end
 Of other ship, one Swede looked down
 Upon the waters, gloomy grown,
The grave of his beloved friend :
The tears that stain a manly cheek,
’Tis no light sorrow *they* bespeak !

O friends who leave us in our youth,
 With our young hearts unused to loss,
 So frantically our passions toss,
We half refuse to feel the truth,
That we can see your forms no more
On this life’s checkered, mournful shore !

Or with the corse, or far away,
 Or seeing buried from our sight,
 Or tracing lines some friend did write—
The sad fact, coming as it may,
The death of a young, tried, true friend
A comrade’s heart doth sorely rend.

THE PARTING OF LOVERS.

(SOME LINES FOUND ON A MISLAID LEAF OF A DESTROYED POEM.)

HE, who would know how lovers part,
Must press the loved one to his heart ;
And feel what ne'er can be expressed,
How throbs the parting lover's breast,
While turning from the one most dear,
More than all else he knows of here ;
In whom are fixed his hopes for life,
Come weal or woe, come peace or strife ;
In peace enough she to be nigh,
In war her name to fortify.

They parted. O ! how lovers part,
Who love with all unselfish heart,
Esteeming each the other more
Than self, or fame, or wealth, or lore,
To be for months, perhaps for years,
Apart in suffering, danger, fears !
Sweet had been all his words, but vain
For more than merely lessening pain,
Such as was sickening her heart,
So sad to her the thought, we part !

They who have sat at eventide,
Beneath the arbor side by side,
Each to the other doubly dear,
Alas ! the parting moment near ;
And felt the last embrace and kiss —
O were it not the last, what bliss—
Then from the clasp of fondest love,
Turned in the bitter pangs of parting,
May know



TO MISS

THROWN like chance moonbeams on a path
Through gloomy woods and wild,
Has been sweet pleasure round my heart,
When thou hast only smiled.
Oh how I hate the bitter thought,
That we must part forever ;
For though I ne'er may see thee more,
I can forget thee never.

A TROUBLE OF LUNG TROUBLE.

(TO A BROTHER INVALID.)

WHEN tired and warm,
To keep you from harm,
Mind the virtues of lemon and barley ;
“ Put in a ‘ stick,’
And drink it down quick,”
And leave a ten-cent piece with Charley.

But I should not come here
To test “ Charley’s ” cheer,
Were I able to reach our hotel, sir ;
I abhor a saloon,
And would count that a boor,
Which would banish them all off to hell, sir.



THE MAN THE MORE MEANLY DEGRADED OF
THE TWO.

(ON HEARING OF THE SEDUCTION OF A PRETTY SCHOOLMATE.)

THE wretch of whom it can be said,
“He led one so she fell,”
Has sunken to as foul a depth
As any e’er called hell.

But he who mends that monster crime
By marriage, love and care,
In greater part atones for it,
And saves the erring fair.



PAYING THE PENALTY.

(A YOUNG MAN’S LAMENT RETURNED TO HIM IN VERSE.)


TO him who turns in memory back
To youth and love’s beginning,
While tortured now on suffering’s rack,
How dire the cost of sinning!

Like fruit from Sodom's cursed soil
Have been my pleasure's flashes ;
With eager lips I seized the spoil,
But now I taste the ashes !



STANZAS

(WRITTEN ON THE PACIFIC, OFF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, BUT NOT
IN SIGHT OF LAND.)

 WIDE expanse of waters ! not a sail
To break the lonely, mild monotony
Of the Pacific ! Those who can regale
Themselves with its refreshing breeze, and see
Beauty in ocean ever, here may be
Content in sooth, and not without delight :
The very motion brings a kind of glee,
In keeping with the sky and wavelets bright ;
And pleasure still is found through feeling and
through sight.

But to the eastward is a land so dear,
I reck but that we leave it far behind !
There have I oft been glad in friendly cheer ;
And found such pleasure oft with bright, refined,

Profusely nature-gifted, charming mind,
I can but gaze, though the horizon bounds
Show not the shore. Its memories are twined
Around my heart. Upon its varied grounds
I've mused with nature oft, and joyed in social sounds.

Ballena is not rich as many a spot
In Southern California, where the palm
Can flourish and all fruits abound ; 'tis not
Bedecked so much with beauty ; but the balm
Of its pure atmosphere inspires a calm
Through weary, troubled mind ; its water-springs
Are limpid ; its nights cool : a very psalm
Of peace is taught one by the toilless things,
Which its secluded life gently around him brings.

But I am journeying homeward ! and the thought
Of those so loving and beloved ; the home
Of hopeful boyhood ; and the holy plot
Of our departed, whither from the dome
Of life and love, the scene of toil and tome,
The mother and two sisters have been borne—
One kissed me weeping ere I turned to roam—
This thought succeeds the grief that I have torn
Myself from much so dear, and I no longer mourn.

“Sail ho ! to windward of the starboard bow !

Come out on deck ; that writing gear belay !”

Ay, ay ! my hearty friend, I’m with you now ;

Where is your steamer ? right beside us, eh !

“The Panama Mail Steamship too, they say.”

We pass the naval compliments ; the sea

And night-fall close the view ; each goes his way ;

‘Men meet, and greet, and part eternally’—

But now the Southern Cross a brighter theme shall be.



NOVA SCOTIA.

{ON REACHING NOVA SCOTIA AFTER AN ABSENCE OF SEVEN YEARS.}

MY native land ! my native land !
Once more I step upon thy sod,
Once more beneath that flag I stand,
Still held so dear through years abroad.

My native land ! my own dear home !

Blest be the souls that drew me here ;

True, I have loved afar to roam,

But O I find thee doubly dear !

My quickened heart its homage pays ;
Would that my words its warmth might tell !
Who holds the harp that sounds thy praise ?
Fain would I once its numbers swell !

My own dear land of rolling hills,
And leafy woods on mount and plain,
And flowery banks by pleasant rills,
And fair slopes stretching toward the main.

What though within thy stern-rock bounds
I see no palm nor mango wave,
Nor hear from spicy bower the sounds
Of south-lands where thy waters lave.

Thine are the sons of honest toil
And sweet contentment crowns their lot !
O may thy patriots guard their soil,
Thy sons can find no happier spot.



THE CANADIAN'S PROUD HOPE.

FRE fifty years more will have come, hurrah !
We shall joy o'er a nation's birth ;
We shall be the Republic of Canada,
Fit to join with the greatest of earth !


Our parents far over the ocean we love,
But we cannot brook trammels like theirs ;
We must choose our own rulers, a king is for serfs,
And by lorddom no patriot swears.

Our longitude also between the great seas,
Even should king and lorddom go down,
Unfits us for joining our senate with theirs ;
And their vote would be worse than the crown.



TRURO.

(ON VIEWING THE TOWN FROM ENSLOW.)

 HERE at the head of Cobequid
Stands Truro, quiet town and fair ;
Green woods and pleasant fields around,
And folk within unpressed with care.

The hurrying of the busy mart,
The crowded thoroughfare at eve,
They have not such to jostle through ;
Nor riot hordes o'er which to grieve.

And though the great may still be thence ;
A Tyndall nor a Dickens come,
A Booth, a Beecher, never heard,
There is no tortturing city hum.

But manly strength and enterprise
And talent there are not unknown,
While beauty in a galaxy,
And modest worth are ever shown.

O Truro, when I first beheld
Thy curling smoke, and towers, and "size,"
How was my youthful spirit moved,
How eager were my youthful eyes !


And now the tortures and the charms
Of city life all unforgot,
Now shall I praise and blame thee more
For what thou art or still art not?



HOME AND HOPE.

1865.

"IN THE LEAFY MONTH OF JUNE."

UR homestead with its pleasant scenes,
Extends along the river's side,
Whose banks the stately evergreens,
High towering o'er their moss cloak, hide.

O cheerful is the light that beams
Through foliage on the water's face!
And blissful is the hope that gleams
For earnest hearts in life's great race.



THANKS TO LONGFELLOW.

LONGFELLOW, thou who hast sung us Evangeline,
Singing so sweetly and teaching so wisely,
Ever interpreting Nature so charmingly,
Here in the Acadie thou hast exalted,
Here would I, though not descended from king-
 wronged,
Ancient Acadians, (still not inheriting
Lands they were driven from,) fain would I thank
 thee.
Acadie's self for thy lay has grown dearer ;
Patience, and woman's devotion seem grander,
Hope more effective, and earth more delightful.



MISS J — G —————

SWEET is the flower of early spring,
That blooms the first to greet the eye ;
Sweet is the bird that comes to sing
 His morning song my window by.
But sweeter far than flower or bird
Is she whom I have met to-day,
Sweeter than can be told by word
A bonnie lassie, kind and gay.

TO MISS T— L—.

HEAR coz. : Why is thy pretty voice
So seldom heard within our dwelling?
Thy presence makes my heart rejoice—
But sure thy charms 'twere useless telling.

Yet, though so clear to others' eyes,
Perhaps thy modesty prevents thee
From seeing worth they highly prize ;
Or is it, ' power unused contents thee ?

Oh ! why are gifted friends so rare ;
And voices sweet so often wanting ?
Nature shines richly everywhere,
But man, how poor, with all his vaunting !



TO MISS B— T—.



FRIEND of mine, so truly dear !

Oft I look back to thy sweet land ;
And know I none, or there or here,
Who can like thee my heart command.

From some remote, divine retreat
An angel must have brought to thee
That nameless charm, but charm so sweet,
Which makes thee what thou art to me.

Thy loved ones are a favored few—
And do they truly know thy worth ?
O in my dreams 'tis thou I view !
And think thy land the blest of earth.

The words "I like," though in my speech
Not as in theirs who but pretend,
Can never here my feeling teach :
Ah ! *yo te amo*, darling friend.



ADVICE ABOUT MARRYING.

TO MISS ———.

HE who can love you with a strong, true love,
Possesses power to conceal his grief
That you refused him ; ay ! to make you cease
To grieve for either, parting as if lief.

Then be not moved by a persistent one
Against your heart and sense to give your hand.
Match not but where both love and reason urge :
Take that for ground, and firmly keep your stand.



PART OF AN EPISTLE

TO CLEMENT E. LITTLE AND ROSS MCLEAN.

FRIENDS of my youth, companions of the days
When life could gather joys a thousand ways,
When hope would paint, in hues divinely fair,
The scenes to come as if there were no care,
While with me now an hour in looking back,
Nor mourn though we can trace no shining track.

Ay! though the years have brought no wealth nor
fame,

But that which makes us scarce ourselves the same —
A change in daily thoughts, beliefs, and tastes,
As 'mid life's varied scenes our being wastes—
Still must ye love to muse o'er some hours fled,
Some scenes recall through which our youth was led,
Still love to think of fields, and banks, and streams,
Which each with its own thousand memories teems.

With reverence first the school-house let us view :
I passed it yesterday and thought of you ;
And others too of our age in the van
Along the restless race from child to man,
Of Dunk and Charley, Perley, Lee and Lou,
And many others less of whom we knew.

And fairer forms before my mind arose,
And faces flushed from "Copenhagen's" close—
A game I hate, though cherry lips I love,
I would their sweets in private only prove—
But ah ! though these so fair, so sportive those,
How many now within the tomb repose !

The teachers too who labored for our good,
How Moore and Creelman plain before me stood !

I can appreciate now their aid and cheer,
Since I have learned the teachers' hard career.
Yet sighed I for their work ; for it did fill
My heart with grief, to see that o'er the hill
That house was pushed, outcrowded by a church—
O God of good, in which should be the birch ?



THE YEAR.

(PART OF A REVERIE ON THE LAST DAY OF THE YEAR, 1880.)

I.

TIME has brought the last leaf of a volume to-day,
A volume of history, comment, and song ;
And my heart grows pensive, as I turn
The last of the leaves which therein belong.
O memory, ne'er lead me back through all !
There is sorrow enough in the present page ;
When thou pointest my mind to the changeless past,
May it be to a joy or a word from the sage.

II.

And why does Time look so stern to-day ?
Through the frost on the window he first looked in,
And he bade good morning with no sweet note,
But he rattled the stove with fearful din.

He sits by the fire, and melts the ice

From his long, gray beard, so matted and curled ;

He talks of his work, nor sighs o'er the way

He has swept his terrible scythe through the world.

III.

O ! look not on him ; but turn thee to me,

The memory from which thou hast prayed ne'er to
part ;

I will hold thee the book he has made thee this year ;

Read : 'twill moisten thine eye, but 'twill not wring
thy heart.

IV.

In arid and wild Arizona, I ween,

There were faces which I have been happy to see ;

There were voices which I have been joyful to hear ;

And the winter days there were not all dull to me.

V.

O Southern California ! How sweet the May morn

When I came o'er its flowery plains and rich vales ;

How soothing the streams to my thirsty eyes,

As they rippled away from the fern-covered dales.

Fair land of the orange, and citron, and olive !

The vine, and the myrtle, and laurel are there ;
And oft do the notes of some maiden's guitar

From her loved garden-bower float out on the air.

How oft in the summer beneath the dense fig-tree,

I have mused on great Nature with poet sublime ;
Or followed the tale of some fond lover's wooing,

Fanned by zephyrs so sweet, that are breathed in
that clime.



A WISH TO BE IN YUMA, ARIZONA, FOR THE WINTER.

(TO J. E. HURFORD, ESQ.)



GIVE me the land that is free from this snow ;

Where the rain does'nt fall half a day in the year !

With the winter not cold and clammy as death ;

'Tis the land for the invalid : why am I here ?

Yes, I wish from my heart I were back there again ;

I swear it, my friend, by the town's Holy Rood !

What mattered the "morals" to such men as we ;

We had friends of our own that were pleasant and
good.

And the tales of the miners were interesting,
As they sat on the porch in that mild, cloudless
clime,
And talked of adventures, and gold, and the "works,"
Till the notes of the bugle * proclaimed "bunking
time."

* Of Fort Yuma just across the Colorado River.






ROUNDS

IN THE

LADDER OF LIFE.

THE RECORD.

HO has not 'heard a voice say, write?
Who does not feel that strong desire
When thoughts sweep o'er him in the night
That he might touch some living lyre?

What shall I write? Thy life-wrought creed,
With songs of progress, truth, and peace:
O strongly bid the right God-speed,
And hope that superstition cease.

CURING SELF-CONCEIT AND SELFISHNESS.


HENS' minds are as different as time-pieces are,
With precious and worthless stones all set ;
And never his wisdom increases far,
Who thinks, in himself many virtues are met.

And tastes are as different as morn from eve ;
And he who heeds not what others desire,
Will by mean impoliteness his kindest friends grieve,
Make them disrespect him, and provoke them to ire.

Of course it is not *yourself*, dear friend,
Who has self-conceit and selfishness :
But your neighbor, and oh ! his wife !—They'll not
mend ;
But then they deserve a hard rub, you'll confess.




GETTING ABOVE POVERTY AND
THRIFTLESSNESS.

 H! Poverty, thou gaunt and hideous hag,
Full of ill-will and heartless cruelty !
Oh ! how can people bear to see thee drag
Thy dabbled skirts, where plump Prosperity,
That maiden sweet and bright, about their homes
should be !



NATURE THE FAIREST LOVE.

 NATURE, fairest love ! my heart doth swell,
Remembering days gone by, the spring-time when
With thee I walked and felt thy holy spell !
Thy beauty was my soul's enchantment then ;
And sweet thy breath in forest and in glen :
I kissed thy hand, presenting me fair flowers ;
And I forgot the common joys of men
In charms like thine ; and lingered in thy bowers ;
And revelled in thy courts by night through glorious
hours.

NATURE THE TRUE TEACHER.

TOO much light prevents our seeing
Some of nature's loveliest views :
'Tis by night the glow of heaven
Charms our spirits and subdues.

So the torches lit by learning
Dim our vision oft by sheen,
While a thousand beauties round us
By our souls are never seen.

But the sun is still a portion
Of a universe sublime ;
While the learned—half fanatics—
By their flambeaus, in our prime
Lure us oft from truthful nature,
And consume our precious time.



THE WORLD WANTS MEN WHO DO THINGS
WELL.

THE world has little need to-day
Of men who pass for "smart ;"
It has a multitude of such
In every kind of art.

The world wants men who do things well,
The *thorough* and the true ;
The men whose honesty is stamped
On every thing they do.



BEAUTIFY THE COUNTRY.

WHY have our roads so many crooks
And little jogs unsightly ?
The turns are unavoidable,
The needful we have rightly :

But this eye-torturing crookedness !
These curves that are not pretty !—
The minds which are not pained at such
The spirit of beauty of pity.

Behold, where farmers have straight roads,
And white-washed barns and fences,
And fields adorned with lines of trees !
How pleasing to the senses !

'Tis not enough to have some trees
In clumps about the dwelling ;
But beautify the country all,
Life's stores of pleasure swelling.



DO RIGHT.

DO right ! Never try to keep in the fashion
If the fashion is not right ;
The fools on the watch for every new style
Have small views but by physical sight.

Do right ! No matter what others may say,
'Tis the nobler part to do right !
Salt your book etiquette with good sense ; and *work* :
You will win, trusting but your own might.

ABUSE OF ANYTHING COUNTED GREAT SIN:

BY the gifts and the goods we possess,
By the courses and work we can choose,
We may rise to higher and purer life :

To do otherwise is to misuse.

And how can we sin against God

In any way that will reach Him, so high,
As when we abuse His handiworks—

Ourselves, or aught else 'neath the sky ?

Disease is a form of sin ;

'Tis a wrong development :

Men trample on nature's laws, and the effect

They say the " Lord's will " has sent.

Let us pause ere we speak of God's will,

Lest we call our errors His way ;

Let " The gentle mother of us all " direct :

Who slight her go meanly astray.

Two men went into their barns

To lead their horses to drink ;

One said, " ha damn you, my pretty sleek Bess ;"

He cursed but he did not think.


The other's horse shied at the door ;

He was one who never did curse,

But he whipped the horse ; he was hurt and afraid ;

Now which of the men sinned worse ?

WE WANT SOMETHING HIGHER.

LEEP comes not to my soul to-night,
And I look forth upon the stars ;
But I would more than planet light,
No influence now hath glowing Mars.

Asia hath taught and Europe tried
Lore which they claim was brought from heaven ;
System with system long has vied,
And sect with sect to spread its leaven.

The bards of Israel have sung,
And sweetly told celestial hopes ;
Great words from learned lands have rung ;
But still the race in darkness gropes.

O that such wisdom might be taught
As would us lead in paths of bliss !
Heavens, with what earnestness I sought !
And thence my spirit dictates this :—

We want the creed that sweetens life,
The creed of conscience, love, and peace ;
We want the end of bigots' strife,
We want sectarian walls to cease.

O ! we want something higher taught,
Than God as jealous, burning fire :
The pulpit scold uplifts us not ;
The wise man points to something higher.



ON LOOKING TO GOD.

IN looking to the glorious God,
What ! bow myself down to the dust,
Like serf beneath a nabob's rod ?
O let me never dread, but trust !

Can the Creator joy to see
The minds that should be rising higher,
Bowed, as in fear, obsequiously ?
'Twould more, methinks, provoke his ire.



A PRAYER, AND AFTERTHOUGHTS.

THE Sovereign Powers who rule this human race !
So wonderful and fair our dwelling-place,
My heart is turned to you in joyful thought,
As rise the pleasures of my daily lot ;
And, still expanding in its happy state,
It seeks the greatest joys in human fate :
To few or many known, whate'er they be,
O let your richest blessings fall on me !
And if 'tis sin, this prayer for more unknown,
Forgive, ye Powers, is it not frailty's moan ?

Is Hope of you ? 'Tis pleasing Hope doth speak
In whispers to my soul, and bid it seek ;
Still seek the good supreme, still onward press,
Still further trust this beauteous life to bless—
To sail the ocean of sweet pleasures here,
In odorous zephyrs from a blissful sphere ;
To find ambrosia and the life refine,
And catch the music of a realm divine !

* * * * *

Though often thus my prayer in earnest hope,
'Twas not in vain, my soul, that thou didst grope ;
The prayer of hope—all hope for good is prayer—
Is never breathed in vain upon the air ;

If unto Powers Divine extend it not,
It blesses us in showers of genial thought ;
As clouds rise heavenward but descend in rain,
And waken beauties on the earthly plain.

And if 'tis true, that prayer to gods defined
Is but the action of perverted mind,
The thought of some one great pervades the whole,
And thought of great, good friends uplifts the soul.
And all that Conscience, Reason, Nature, teach,
Should guide us toward the heights our souls would
reach,

That liberal to all and sworn to right,
Our course be true to the celestial height,
Where man may breathe an atmosphere of peace,
And still the pleasures of his life increase !

Love, fairest of the Powers, favors mankind ;
And has our noblest thought as "love" defined !
Love is the cream of prayer ; the gratitude
Alone, which serves to please the Powers of Good :
They may come in and sup, if love the feast,
And who gives most have most his love increased :
Their ways are all mysterious to man,
But Love controls and beautifies their plan.

DO SOMETHING, AND SOMETHING GOOD.

WITHOUT the blessed power of wealth,
What can we do when not in health?
Though 'tis not given to all mankind
To live in health, and pleasure find
In rearing offspring trained for good,
Or stand as teachers true have stood,
Supplying minds with garnered lore,
True wealth in this age as of yore—
Those offices as truly great
As any known to mortal state—
Though one of millions leads the force
That stops the tyrant in his course,
Repels the wrong, and helps the right,
And brings the imprisoned forth to light,
Or gives the genius-built plan
For helping fast-progressing man;
Yet few are they who cannot find
Some good employment for the mind:
Kind words may by us all be given
And acts of love make earth a heaven!

PIECES

WRITTEN IN

PROSPECT OF DEATH.

THOUGHTS OF GOD AND MY DESTINY.

1878.

THERE is a God, the primal source
Of light, and life, and love ;
Who is eternally enthroned
Creations all above !

When He commanded it should form,
The world began its course,
And felt from the creative will
Preserving, guiding force.

Till fields were decked with flowers,
 Fish swarmed the waters, and the birds
 With music filled earth's bowers.

“And man became a living soul,”
The chief o’er all beside,
Although the loveliest of God’s works
Was she given for his bride !

Their race is spread o'er every land,
'Neath chill and balmy sky ;
And of the thousand thousands now,
One, a frail one, am I.

I walk beneath umbrageous trees,
I look on fruit and flower ;
I loiter in the orange grove,
Or sit in spicy bower.

I hum the words of lover's song,
Or truths of sage recall ;
I think of friends, o'er nature muse,
But sorrow flavors all.

Ah, weak in body, sad at heart,
 Soon earth no more I'll see
 With mortal eyes, but not hereon
 My life shall goaléd be.

E'en now I feel a gentle cord
 Unseen, mysterious,
 That draws me to the God of all,
 JEHOVAH glorious !

The centre of that Paradise,
 Eternally outspread
 From infinite to infinite,
 The centre and the Head.

Thence whither spirits take their flight,
 Thither my course can be ;
 And choosing flight sublime, or rest,
 In joy eternally.



STANZAS

TO THE ONCE BETROTHED OF THE WRITER.

FORGIVE, O Lady dear, forgive,
If I have wronged by deed or thought
The heart that chose with mine to live,
When to its portal, love I brought.
The future shone through bright hope then ;
I could not read the book of fate ;
But now I feebly move my pen
To tell my doom—for thee too late !

The slow, incurable disease
Has baffled skill, and hope, and care ;
Changes of clime can only please ;
It works its subtle, ceaseless wear.
I've caused thee sorrow ! But my heart
Then hopeful, strong, was thine alone ;
I planned for each a happier part,
And sought thy joy more than my own.

Thou kindly sayst, " I'll ne'er regret
The hours we've spent in lovers' bliss ;"
Of all the pleasures shown me yet
The sweetest were our clasp and kiss !

O for such fond and rapturous love,
 As blessed us then through starry eve !
 Alas ! how cruel did fortune prove—
 Yet o'er the change O do not grieve !

But oh forgive me, Lady dear !
 And think of me as lover fond ;
 But shed no unavailing tear
 When for my corse the earth has yawned.
 And if chance words of compliment
 To others paid e'er meet thine eye,
 Remember what to thee I've sent,
 And *hours of raptures* long gone by !



TO MISS L — H ———.

IN my couch, weary worn, 'mid no hearts that I
 know,
 My kind, cheering friend, oh ! how sadly I miss
 thee ;
 But sometimes I fancy thy lips coming low
 To kiss me good-night as my sister would kiss me.

And though fate has made reasons to keep thee away
One wish I must breathe while so sadly I miss thee
Ere my form be but meet for its cold, kindred clay,
O kiss me good-bye as my sister would kiss me !



THOUGHTS ON MY LIFE.

ALONE ! and my heart is filled with thoughts
That cannot be told in speech ;
The ghosts of hopes long dead arise,
And they point where I could not reach.

But they tell me not now as the hopes said then,
"Thou canst ; go on to the goal :
'Twill be high as thy utmost wish has been,
And satisfy thy soul."

They mock, but strangely I can smile
At the close of my blasted life !
And what ! whether thus or otherwise
We end the joy and strife ?

Do I not well that I calmly smile ?

Can I know what seeds I have sown ?

Should I curse what I cannot understand ?—

The great faults were my own.

I am not willing to die so young

With life-work planned but unwrought :

Yet it is some joy that at fate so hard

Impatience can move me not.

And it is not nothing, nor can I laugh,

That ‘I have no child to keep

My name in remembrance ;’ but my soul

Is as calm as the angel of sleep.



A FAREWELL.

(MONTEREY, 1880. AT DAVID JACKS'S, THE WRITER'S SECOND HOME.)



ND I am ready for the sea once more !

And I shall stand upon the deck at eve

To take a last farewell of this loved shore !

And still, though bounding homeward, I shall
grieve

As one no longer stranger here. I leave
This circle, you who are as dear as kind,
More sadly than I left my home ! We cleave
To much, unprized till to be left behind ;
But not that moves me now ; here was I so entwined !

Friends of my heart, farewell ! The tear-drops starting,
Would flow too freely should I strive to tell
My more than deep regrets at this last parting.
None other such can come while I shall dwell
In any land of earth ; this breaks the spell,
If such it were, that bound me to the shore
Of the Pacific : I have heard the knell
Of all life's dearest hopes in its deep roar !
Farewell to them and You ! Farewell for evermore.



THOUGHTS WHEN DEATH SEEMED VERY NEAR.

1881.

WHEN our beloved friends depart,
 We take a bright, poetic view ;
 But when we near that death ourselves,
 We seek to feel but what is true.

A plant, an animal, a world
 Becomes an individual thing,
 Pursues its course, matures, decays,
 And is returned whence it did spring.

Nothing material is lost,
 But individuality
 Is known to-day, to-morrow gone—
 Such is the fate of such as we.



THE FIGHT AGAINST DEATH.

FACE to face I have fought the foe
Disputing every foot of ground ;
But the power that layeth all men low,
Doth steadily press me back I have found.

Ah yes ! we may fight with no nerveless hand,
And retreat with unwilling foot in the strife :
We can but retard : it is Death's to stand
Till the end of the action called mortal life.



TO MY SISTERS LAURA AND KATE.

BELOVED sisters : when the calm
That follows sharp and deep distress
Has soothed my spirit, like the balm
Which pilgrims to their worn hearts press.

When I have found the pillowed ease,
On couch like mine not too much known,
Come happy moments ; and in these
I think of your work, not my own.

How you have blessed me many a day !

Devoted, helpful, loving care !

Through years when I was far away,

Your kindness followed everywhere.

And must I die without the power

To recompence you ought for all ?

You have my love and thanks each hour,

But they, in world so bright, how small !

O yes, this life *is* beautiful !

In youthful, healthful, hopeful day,

Like children sweet and dutiful,

The varied seasons round us play.

No day without its joys is found,

While we have mind unclouded still :

Heaven is within us and around,

And each may brighten his at will.

THE END.







